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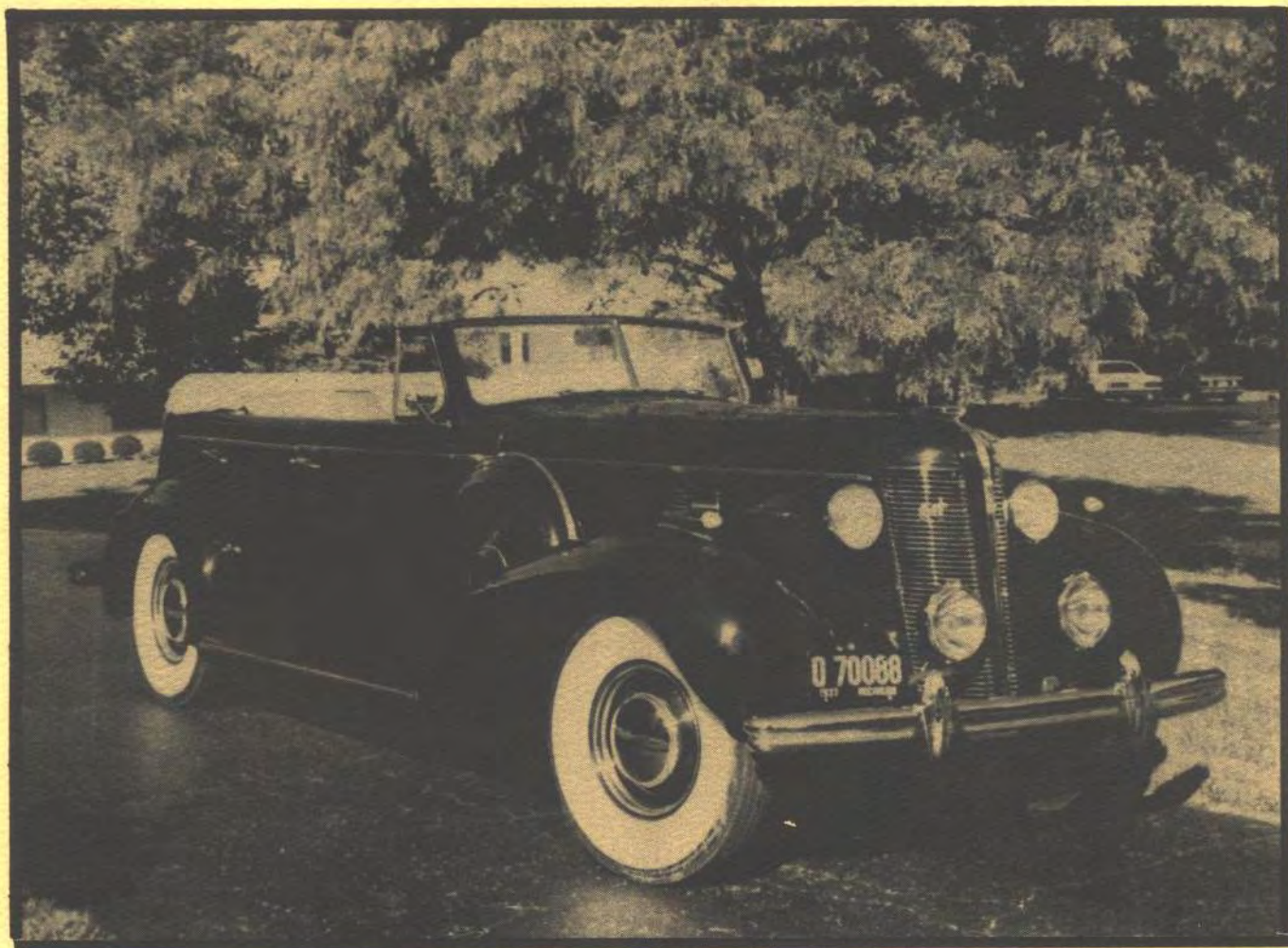
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# THE TORQUE-TUBE

THE NEWS PUBLICATION FOR MEMBERS

OF THE 1937-1938 BUICK CLUB • FOUNDED 1980



**Volume IX • Number 7**





# THE TORQUE·TUBE

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Volume IX, Number 7

May 1991

William E. Olson, Editor • 842 Mission Hills Lane, Columbus, Ohio 43235



## Miscellaneous Matter



This issue will not be one of my greater efforts, and will be a few weeks late to boot. I am sorry about that. The past 30 days have been complicated by unusual demands on my time, the inevitable necessity, come mid-April, of getting out and cleaning up my yard, and — this is the worst part — moving my office into another building. I had nothing to do with the latter; it was forced on me, and the only more unpleasant and disruptive business is moving one's household. As these lines are being written, I have only the foggiest idea of what this issue will contain, or how many pages it will have. So, if it looks like it was thrown together, if you think you've seen some of the stuff in it before, it probably was and you probably have. The next one will, I hope, be better.

### CLUB MEETS

As of May 7, sign-up for the Western Club Meet (July 21-22, immediately following the BCA National in California) has been distressingly small. If I have space, I will put the registration form for this into this issue, but in any event, the form appears in Issue 5. If you need info on the Western Meet, call Cecil Don (#637), 916/673-9032 or Carl Dahl (#868), 916/441-2507.

Also as of May 7, there have been about 12 sign-ups for the Eastern Club Meet (Columbus, Ohio, June 27-29). That is not enough to carry it off as planned; I need 25 hotel rooms taken for Friday and Saturday and 50 people for the banquet. If this issue reaches you before May 25, and you have not yet done anything about this, please act pronto. If I do not have the required numbers by May 28, I must either cancel the whole thing or try to renegotiate the deal. Neither is attractive. A registration form for the Eastern Meet appeared in Issue 6. If you need info on this, call me.

If these two meets fizzle, they will very likely be the last ones we will have. It is no joy to go to the trouble of planning an event and have no more than a dozen people show up for it.



FOUNDED BY DAVE LEWIS





## COVERS



**FRONT COVER:** A nice dark blue 1937 Roadmaster convertible sedan owned by David Paulisin (#704) of Birmingham, Michigan. (I believe the tires on this car are slightly oversized.)

**BACK COVER:** May 1940. It's late afternoon in Miami, Florida and the sun casts long shadows across the sidewalk in front of the Roney Plaza Hotel. A woman waits for someone: perhaps a friend, perhaps her husband. From out of the shadowy entrance portico of the hotel steps a dour-looking middle-aged gentleman, dressed smartly in a double-breasted Palm Beach suit, brown-and-white shoes, and Panama hat. He looks familiar somehow, and the young man passing by takes a second look. The gentleman's 1937 Buick is waiting for him at the curb. A prominent local businessman? Maybe, but there seems something sinister in his manner. King of the Florida rackets? We'll never know. (Another priceless tableau from the works of Marion Post Wolcott, who documented the American scene for the Farm Security Administration -- see Vol. VII, No. 6 for another example. Photo from the Library of Congress, courtesy of Bill Shipman (#617)).

### IN MEMORIAM: DICK BOYER

Richard B. (Dick) Boyer died on April 2, after a valiant struggle with cancer. As many of you know, Dick and his son Skip sold a variety of Buick reproductions over a number of years, and amassed a fine collection of automobiles. In my opinion, no finer person has graced the antique car hobby; Dick's attention to quality, and his integrity and unfailing good humor, should live in the memories of everyone who knew him. In lieu of flowers, the family suggested that contributions to the Visiting Nurses Association would be appreciated, and I made such a contribution on behalf of the Club. The memorial service included a parade (if that be the right word) of antique cars, headed by a beautiful 1947 Chrysler hearse. I spoke with Skip Boyer at Carlisle, and it appears that he (along with some associates) will endeavor to continue the business. We wish him well.

Jim Flack (#499) of Los Altos Hills, California will be our new Roster-Maker. Jim has a good understanding and command of computer systems, and I expect he will be able to take this over without any trouble when the time comes. Thanks, Jim. There were exactly two other volunteers responding to my request in the last issue for help with this, one of whom is an "informational" member who doesn't even own a '37 or '38 Buick. I also received some free advice from a few people as to why it should be very easy for me or someone else to do the Roster, the implication being that I/he/they don't understand computers -- but no offers from the advice-givers to do anything. They're right: I don't understand computers; I know nothing about computers; I don't want to know anything about computers. I wanted someone who does know to do it, and I have that. Leaving aside the advice-givers, the response was three out of about 425 members, or 0.7%. All I can say is that the rest of you are lucky there are a few people in this Club who are willing to do something.



## ROSTER CORRECTIONS

Please make the following changes in your 1991 Roster:

H. Lee Hopkins (#13)  
6378 Elk River Rd.  
Eureka, CA 95501

Ted Taylor (#792)  
3313 South 298th St.  
Auburn, WA 98001



## NEW CLUB JACKETS

Mike Adler (#103) has had made up a few Club jackets as a sort of "pilot project" to see how much interest there may be. An ad for these appears elsewhere in this issue. I saw Mike at Carlisle and he showed me one. Believe me, folks, they are very nice. Unlike the ordinary silk-screened designs, the Club logo on these is embroidered, and the maker did a beautiful job. They are more expensive than the usual "club" product, but in my opinion are worth the extra money. I expect to buy one myself. At present, there are only a few made up, and I don't know what the "lead time" on them will be, so if you want one, give Mike a call.

This is also a good time to remind everyone that I still have a good supply of decals (approximately 2" x 3") and cloth patches (approximately 3" x 5") showing the Club logo in red, white, and blue. The decals are two for \$1.00 and the patches are \$3.50 each.





# That's my Brewster Town Car

By Bob Trueax (#351)

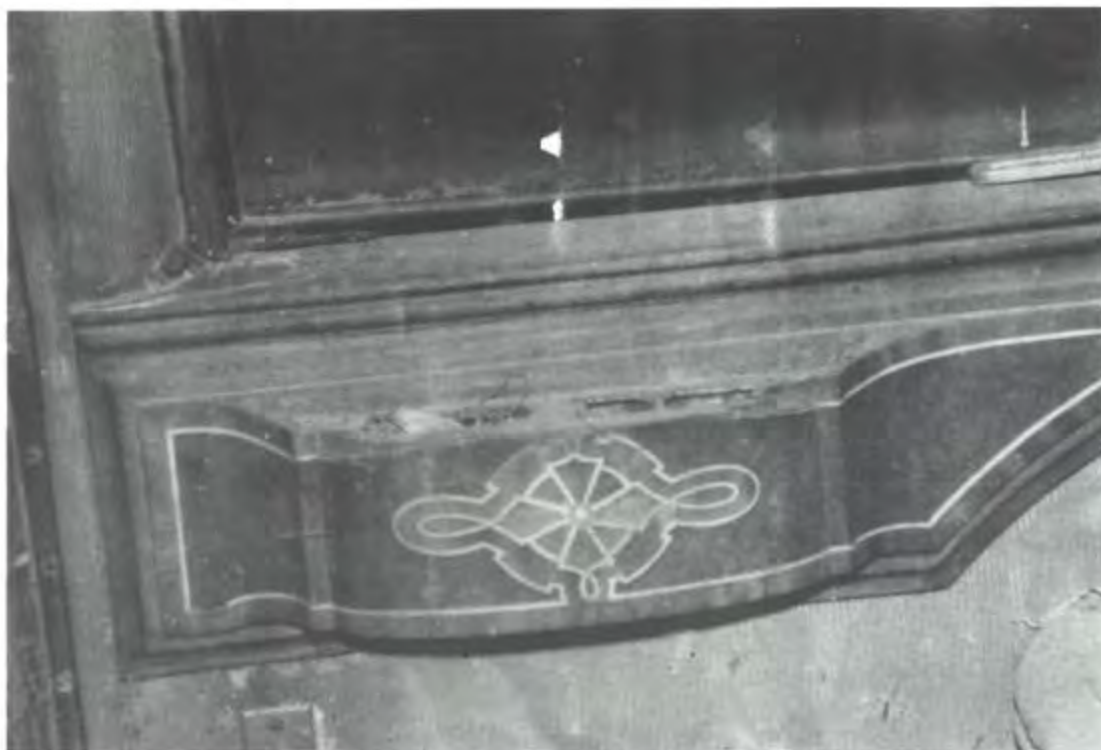
Well, Bill, you finally did something to get me to write to you, and it wasn't something to upset me either. You printed a picture of my car.

The '38 Buick Brewster Town Car shown on the back cover of The Torque Tube, Volume IX, Number 5, must be my car. I have enclosed some pictures showing the car as it is now. It is my intention to restore the car to its original condition, but I haven't gotten seriously into doing the restoration yet.

I bought the car from a fellow in Los Angeles, who had a collection of some 600 cars which were used in movies and television. When I bought the car, I had a choice of two '38 Buick town cars. The other one was a Fleetwood-bodied car, having the same rear treatment, but otherwise being very unspectacular in comparison to the Brewster. The Fleetwood was a running car, so the price was several thousand dollars more, but the car still needed total restoration. The interior of the Fleetwood had woodgrain metal garnish moldings and was otherwise very mundane. Both cars are on 90 Series chassis.



*Slightly sad nose of the Brewster Buick shows that a few parts are missing, but nothing really serious. Assuming -- as seems virtually certain -- that it is the same car as pictured in Karl Zahm's 1947 photo, it has obviously changed color, and is here shown in what appears to be gray primer.*



*Interior detail shows a custom-made inlay in fancy woods and German silver; style here is reminiscent of the early 1920s.*

This Brewster body is unusual in that it has the quarter windows behind the rear doors. A collector here in California has a scrapbook with pictures of many Brewster bodies, and not one has this styling. I did find one picture of an almost identical body, mounted on a 1929 Rolls-Royce chassis, in a book on Rolls-Royce. Some exterior differences exist on that car, and the interior wood treatment is totally different.

I had no history on the car, other than that it sat in a chicken coop in the Los Angeles area for 12 years before I got it. The cover picture doesn't add a great deal to the actual history, but at least I now know what the tail lights are supposed to look like. Those were missing, along with the driver's seat and the sidemount tread covers. Building a seat isn't a large problem, as the upholstery is about the same on all Brewsters; as for the tread covers, well, you just look till you find the right size. The problem with the tail lights was not even knowing what to look for. Now, thanks to the Club, I know what I need.

I have talked to both Jim Pearsall and Karl Zahm on the phone, since the magazine came out. Jim was a great help with additional details on the Brewster and later the Inskip companies, and sent me a great number of Xerox copies of info on both companies. Inskip was very possibly involved with the mounting of my body on the '38 Buick chassis, as Brewster actually went bankrupt in 1937. Much of the material sold at auction went to Inskip. Karl had only the one picture of the car, and it came to him in a box of other pictures and literature. He knew nothing further on the car.

Bill, thanks for putting some excitement in my life.

*Shucks, Bob, there was nothin' to it!*  
*Bill*





*Some work required here, but the result will ultimately be most interesting.*



***FROM "DOWN UNDER"***



**A REAL PROJECT**



**SORTING OUT A CENTURY**

**By Bill Denney (#863) - Dunbogan, Australia**

The word "Century" in script on a hood panel and a chassis number were the only clues to the identification of the remains confronting me in a dry creek bed hundreds of miles "out west" in New South Wales, Australia. Once an impressive automobile, the hulk had been abandoned and pillaged of its power unit and the wheels that had conveyed this once-proud piece of American know-how along the road systems of two continents. This car should have qualified for a better retirement, but some callous being had committed an atrocity that it did not deserve. (I discovered later that the engine had been extracted for use in a "mud-buggy" — a popular sport out there in the



"bush".) As I composed myself and began taking stock of the scattered collection, I found I had a useful body on a chassis, but the floor and sills left a lot to be desired. Without its supporting wheels, the body was down in the dirt, and even though the climate out there is dry, the occasional flash floods send a lot of water down the normally dry creek beds. I determined the method used by the assassins to push this corpse into her grave — on one rear guard (fender to you Yanks) was the clear mark of a bulldozer blade. This had made a nice crease, but fortunately without damage to the top (we call them "hoods") bow mechanism or distortion of any other body panels. The front bumper was missing, together with the hood and side panels, grille, front suspension, all four wheels and the front and back seats.

The sad remains had once been a '38 Century four-door convertible. Had I known when I first saw it that only 219 '38 Century "phaetons" were produced, 11 of which were for export, I might have decided to leave it in the creek bed. My little trinket was not one of the export models. Quite by chance, I learned that a fellow club member who had bought a '38 Special, and tracked down the person he thought to be its original owner, was told she hadn't owned a sedan but rather a convertible! This of course was the car I now call mine. Moreover, she had retired only 20 miles away from me at Port Macquarie, a beautiful seaside resort sitting between Sydney and Brisbane on Australia's eastern seaboard. This lifted my day, to find the car's one-time owner virtually at my doorstep. I discovered that the car had been purchased in the States, when this lady's husband was a war correspondent, and that they'd crossed the country twice in it from coast to coast before shipping it out to Australia.



*The Bill Denney 60-C as found in its burial ground; the crease in the left rear fender can be clearly seen. Nasty looking, isn't it?*

Of course, when I visited this lady the obvious question was asked: "When may I see the car again?" I thought it only kind to break the news as quietly and gently as I could, so I showed her some snapshots I'd taken of my gruesome find. The reaction was something else! This poor woman, expecting something not quite so ravaged, squirmed in her chair, and I'm sure it was only with my promise to fully restore her former pride and joy to its previous glory that she seemed to recover from the shock.

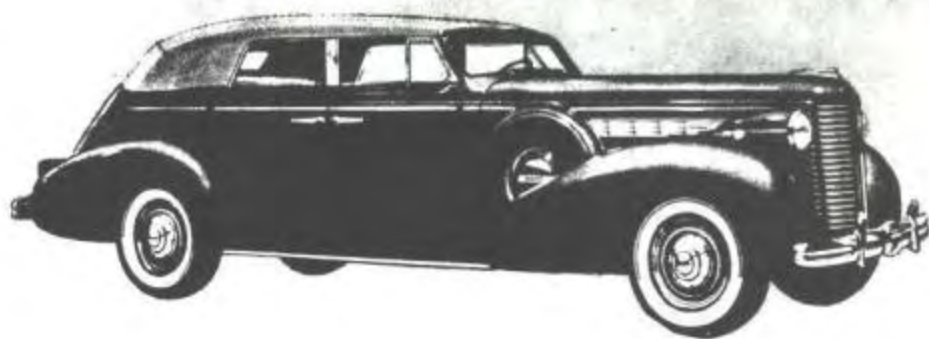
Fortunately, I didn't promise when that would eventuate. We hit hard times, moved, and a coronary almost wrapped up the whole proceeding. However, now I'm back on track again, encouraged with numerous replacement parts. I realize what a task I have ahead, especially with more years behind me than in front. But what a way to go, resurrecting the only 60-C in Australia. That would be an achievement, but being able to drive her again, that's the real incentive.

It is said that the only difference between men and boys is the price of the toys! All donations will be gratefully accepted.



EDITOR'S NOTE: As the story and photo show us, our friend from "Down Under" has taken on a formidable and daunting challenge. I don't think I'd try to do that car in the U.S. Some time ago I received from Bill a request for information peculiar to four-door convertibles which I could not supply. I sent the request on to some Club members who have similar model cars, in the hope that they could help Bill out, and I gather that, on his own, he contacted some other members who have '38 60-Cs. However, no help was forthcoming, leading Bill to get pretty frustrated and disappointed. Shame on you guys! This poor fellow is in Australia trying to restore an American car that's one-third gone. He needs help! It costs less than one lousy dollar to send an airmail letter to Australia. (One notable exception to the this-nut-in-Australia-is-too-much-trouble syndrome is Lou Wildt (#245), who owns a different model car, but who apparently has nevertheless become a Bill Denney pen-pal and sent over a bunch of parts. This is the second time in less than a year that I've had occasion to publicly thank Lou for his generous assistance to a fellow member in need. We need more people like Lou and fewer don't-give-a-damns.)

One thing Bill Denney will need sooner or later is some photographs, measurements, templates, etc. for front and rear seats, as he hasn't any at all. Can anyone help with this? The seats in a 40-C should be essentially the same. How about it, guys?





# Ah, to be **EIGHTEEN AGAIN!**



## **KING OF THE MOUNTAIN**

**By Al Anderson (#723)**

My fascination for anything mechanical goes back to about three months before I was born, but I'll pick it up when I was twelve. I was the "hang around kid" at the local garage. It was an Esso station run by Lefty Weber. Lefty was one of those rare people who liked everybody, and everybody liked him. He also owned a beautiful '37 66-S, a black beauty with sidemounts. Now, at that time, a Buick was just a Buick to me. I knew little of models, etc. Well, on a ride to Paterson, NJ to pick up some parts, Lefty educated me as to the models. He started with the top of the line Limited and worked on down to the Special. He also told me the model numbers - 90's, 80's, etc., and I have never forgotten them. His favorite, and I guess he passed it on to me, was the Century. His business in Paterson complete, we headed for Riverdale via Snake Hill. Snake Hill was about a two-mile grade with sharp curves, and it was famed as a test to show the true mettle of any car. The hill had two lanes up and one down. It seemed almost everyone going up the hill was playing King of the Mountain. Now, I made that trip with Lefty many times and every time we ran up the hill the Century was king.

At the top, the Hamburg Pike started and Lefty would shift to second gear, speed onto the Pike, and wind the Century up. I would always watch the speedo at these times, and often it was near eighty when he shifted to third. The sound of power and speed and the smoothness of the Buick made me a fan for life.

Now we will move from 1948 to 1951. Maggie Merner was a real estate person in Oak Ridge, NJ. I think I saw her once or twice through a mutual friend, but her claim to fame was that she owned a '41 Century with compound carbs. This car was also in 'like new' condition and maybe twice a year this friend of mine and I would polish her Buick. Bud would pick it up early on a Saturday, come get me, and would break all world records for polishing a car. She would tell him to be sure the car was back to her by late afternoon. By noon, the car was polished, and we would remove the wad of flat washers her son had put between the accelerator pedal and the floorboards in an attempt to slow Maggie down (she was known for a heavy foot). We would then cruise the roads of North Jersey picking on anything that would race us. That ultimate Century would easily blow the doors off Olds 88's or Hudson Hornets. We would run them from the lights or from a roll. Fords, Mercs, and such would fall by the side. If World War II had not happened, I wonder what Buick would have been by 1950. Except for a few '42s, Buick did not have a performance car till '54 when again they offered a Century, but never again would Buick so dominate the road.

So, on to 1952. Another buddy had a '37 - '41. A nice car and even though we put in dual exhausts and a fresh valve job, the car ran well but never posed a threat to acceleration records. Vic and I talked often of finding a Century, but already attrition had taken many and they were hard to find. But one day he picked me up saying he



*Front view with Christmas bow, but where's the snow?*



had a surprise. Sure nuff, when we got to his house and he opened the garage doors, there was a '37 - 66S. He told me he found it in a junkyard and bought it for \$35.00. He started a very noisy, knocking motor and pulled it out into the light. One good look and I remember staring in disbelief. It was Lefty's old Century. I knew he had sold it around 1950 and it had kicked around a bit since, but the body still looked good. Over the winter Vic had the motor rebuilt by a local machine shop. He replaced the king pins and brakes. When they rebuilt the motor, I had them mill the head 120 thousandths. We went to a huge boneyard in Clifton, NJ, and there on Buick row found a crunched '41 Century. We bought the compound carb assembly - the whole thing for \$10.00 - went home and cleaned it up and put them on the '37 - 66S. We also ran dual exhausts with hot rod type mufflers. Now, the Special sounded good. With the same set up it would bark pretty loud (a requirement of early hot rodding), but when we fired up that fresh Century with all that compression those twin exhausts really did make some music. After a break-in period of about 1,000 miles, (that took about a week) we took to the road seeking prey. We spent all the money we made working during the day burning gas at night. We ran the circuit, going anywhere we heard there was a fast car. Dragstrips were not existent in NJ yet, so all racing was street racing. We seldom ever lost, again taking on Super 88's, and by then early Hemi's with their weird transmissions.

We spent the spring and summer of 1953 in that bad-ass Century. Then Vic went off to California. He raced the car at Lyons Dragstrip in 1955 turning in the high 16 seconds in the quarter mile.

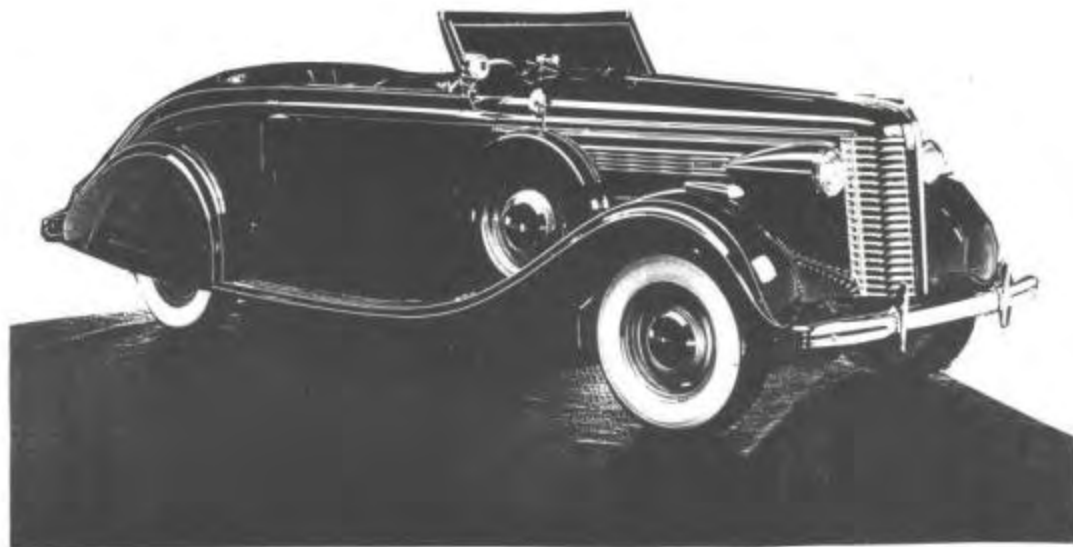


*Engine compartment view shows dual carb manifold and exhaust headers.*

I recently talked to Vic after 30 years. He lives in British Columbia now. During the phone conversation the '37 Century came up and the hell we raised with it. He was amazed when I told him I had one. About then, I knew what I would do and I did it. You purists will shake your heads, but that's too bad. I now drive a copycat of the Century we ran in 1953. The only difference is I run a 3:40 axle ratio, not the 3:90. Also, I rebuilt the motor with '52 internal parts and a '52 cylinder head. Open the hood and it looks like a '37 with '41 dual carbs. Nothing has been done that cannot be put back to original - but every time I drive it, I turn eighteen again. Don't believe me? Ask my wife. My wife and I take off at every chance we get. The car is a driver, not a show car, and I did what I dreamed of for 35 years. I smile every time I walk into the garage and see my '37 Century waiting to go.

Now, you ask, what the hell does the '41 Century have to do with this tale of a '37. Well, that fast '41 inspired me and I decided that someday I was going to put a carb set-up like it on a '37. I did it in '53. I did it again in '90!

I want to thank Lefty Weber for being the kind of person he was. God Bless you wherever you may be. Thank Maggie for wanting her Century polished so often. And Vic can thank me - it was my idea.



Another custom-bodied Buick. This is a Lancefield Drophead (presumably English) done on a 40-series chassis. The picture is taken from an auction catalog of several years ago. Unlike most custom body builders, Lancefield did not use the stock fenders, and if they made those on the car from scratch, it was one hell of a job. The stock sidemount covers were not used, either, and the car has a flat windshield and no vent windows, as well as Canadian Buick hubcaps and left-hand drive. Does anyone know where this car is today?





# TECHNICAL TIPS



## EXHAUST PIPE GASKET

By David Bylsma (#117)

This may be your answer to an exhaust pipe-to-exhaust manifold gasket. I have not been able to find a good gasket. After fighting with an exhaust leak for about three months, I decided to make a gasket that works.

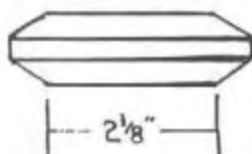
I went to an automotive store and bought a donut gasket. The hole in the donut gasket must be 2-1/8", because that is the inside diameter of the exhaust pipe. The outside diameter of the donut gasket will be more than large enough, because the inside diameter of the hole in the exhaust manifold is 2-1/4".

Donut gaskets are tapered on both ends. You need a gasket that is flat on the end that will touch the exhaust manifold. But it must be tapered on the end that will touch the exhaust pipe. I took my donut gasket to a machine shop and had them machine one end of the gasket flat on a lathe. Then they put it on a belt sander to smooth the flat surface. Once that is done the gasket is ready to put on the engine.

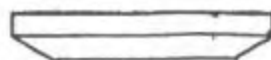
When you put this gasket in place, the tapered end of the gasket will pretty much center itself, in the flared portion of the exhaust pipe. You just have to make sure you tighten the two bolts evenly. Also the new gasket will be thick enough so you can look between the exhaust pipe and manifold to see if the gasket moved on you. You may have to use a mirror to do so. Also make sure you do not tighten the bolts too tight, so as to break the "ears" on the exhaust manifold.

It would not be a bad idea to have more than one gasket made up, when you are doing it. That way you will always have a spare.

New Donut Gasket



New Flat Edge



## GASOLINE SAFETY

Safety is a subject that cannot be overemphasized. Most of us have a pretty good idea about what safe practices are; the trouble comes when we short-cut them. Work on gas tanks is especially hazardous, and I prefer to leave it to professionals. If you are moved to take the tank out of your car yourself, pay heed to the following story, sent in by Harry Logan (#651). It seems that a fellow decided to take his tank out. He removed the drain plug and filled a container with the drained gas. So far, so good.

He did not, however, put the drain plug back in. As he was working to get the tank out, some gas remaining in the tank ran out through the drain plug hole, and struck his trouble light, which shattered, igniting the gas. This poor fellow suffered horrible burns and ultimately died. The lesson is plain. I favor using one of the squeeze-bulb syphons if you must do this at all.

### WOODGRAINING

I found the recommendation that in the last issue I said I'd lost. It came from Harry Logan (#651). The firm is called "Fauxreal" and the proprietor is Craig Clemens, 499 Embarcadero, Studio 14, Oakland, CA 94606. 415/839-6809. As with the firm mentioned last time, some sort of pattern or photographs will be necessary. Price is \$835 for a coupe and \$880 for a four-door. (Don't ask me how to pronounce "faux": it's French and I think it means "false".)

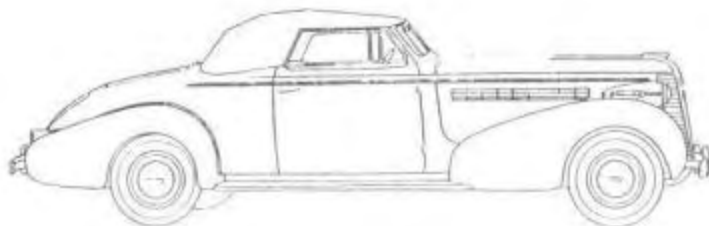
Another recommendation comes from Bill Gillespie (#874). Bill recommends Ken Liska, 1424 Dogwood Court, Kissimmee, FL 34744. 407/933-4032. Liska advertises in the BCA Bugle and is probably a Buick specialist; he thus probably has a better knowledge of correct patterns than the "generic" woodgrainers. He's a bit cheaper: about \$725 for a sedan.

I have not seen examples of the work of any of the three persons mentioned in this and the last issue. Woodgraining is a subject upon which opinions may vary considerably, and the best course, if feasible, is to look at some examples of work on actual cars before committing the big dollars it takes today.

For what it may be worth as a historical footnote, Harry Logan also says he talked to a fellow who has a '38 Roadmaster with the "chevron"-patterned dash seen on some original '38 Centuries. My personal opinion is that the "chevrons" were not very good-looking, and it may be that this dash treatment was discontinued during the model year because customers thought the same thing. I suspected that "chevrons" were used on some '38 80 and 90 series cars, but this is the first indication I've had that such was in fact the case. There is no effective way to duplicate the "chevron" pattern today, so '38 large series restorers use woodgraining, which appeared on many cars originally.

### SIX-VOLT ALTERNATOR

I received a brochure from a firm that sells six-volt alternators. Those of you who are not "purists" and find old-style generators and voltage regulators less than wholly satisfying may wish to try this. A mounting bracket may need to be improvised. They come with a 3/8" drive pulley, but other pulleys are available. Price is \$114.95 plus \$5.00 shipping. Fifth Avenue Antique Auto Parts, 502 Arthur Avenue, Clay Center, Kansas 67432. 913/632-3450.





## HOW I DID IT - PART II

By Jim Rufener (#767)

In my first article, I talked about getting started on removing and rebuilding the engine in my 1938 Special. (See Issue 5.)

After thinking about the best way to remove the engine, I decided to take all the front sheet metal off the car. It is much easier that way to get at the engine, and with the front end exposed those parts are easy to clean and paint if necessary. Again, I suggest that the removed nuts, bolts, etc. be put into sandwich bags along with identifying notes, and that cardboard outlines be made showing the attachment of parts. I did not make, but now wish I had made, more drawings of parts, lines, wiring and the like in relation to one another. You may think you will remember the relationships — but time sure dulls the ol' memory.

I am still amazed at how every nut and bolt came off easily. I do not believe anything had been unfastened since the car was assembled at the factory. A car with a lot of internal rust and corrosion would of course have presented a bigger problem. The only bolt problem was the fender attachments to the body; I broke off five on both sides. The anchor nuts are behind the kick panels. I obtained all new anchors, bolts and washers from Bob's Automobilia.

The radiator went off to be boiled out. (Temperature would sometimes get into the 200-degree range.) I replaced the hoses when I put it back in.

I started on dismantling the wiring harness under the dash. (I had ordered a new harness from Harnesses Unlimited and had it within a week.) Everything under the dash looked new, and I wish that Buick had engineered a plug-in connector at the firewall, so a person could replace only the wiring from the firewall forward. That would have made things easier. The work does not present any complex problems, and the diagrams and instructions from Harness Unlimited are good, but working under the instrument panel simply is not a joy.

With wiring out of the way, I returned to the temperature gauge sending unit. This consists of a bulb which is screwed into the cylinder head, and a hollow tube which runs to the gauge on the instrument panel. It is all one piece, there are no replacements, and the units are very difficult to repair — so, if you break it, you have a big problem. From the beginning, I'd been putting a few squirts of penetrating oil on the bulb end every day I worked on the car. Getting the bulb end out of the head is the big problem; there is likely to be corrosion around the threads, and if you try to force it, it will very likely break. So now the fun began: no bad words, just easy probing, pulling, soaking and blowing out with compressed air. It would not come out. I looked for another solution, even though I knew in my heart that there aren't any. Nope, there's only one way to do it. Once more before I try to force it — I said a prayer to the Man Above — oh, what a joy when the bulb came out attached to the lead-in! Guess I must be among the deserving — at least I was that day.

I got hold of my good neighbor up north, Charles Scott, and we removed the engine with clutch and transmission attached. The rear engine mounts looked good and I decided to leave them alone, but did replace the two round rubber washers in the front mounts. Gundy's Transmission in Mora, Minnesota checked out the transmission "innards" and put in a new torque ball seal kit while my engine work was being done.

Engine, clutch and transmission went into the back of my "beater" ('78 GMC pickup) for the 20-mile ride to National Bushing & Parts in Mora. I had talked with Dan Stassen of National Bushing about what I thought needed to be done. At that time I believed my problems would be limited to bad rings and some wear on the bearings, and we considered changing over to insert-bearings if the rod bearings were bad. We also talked about going to hydraulic lifters, but in the end I decided not to do that. (One thing I definitely wanted was an oil filter, and I obtained one from an early '50s Buick. In connection with the use of that, I closed up the vent in the rear of the valve cover and substituted a later-year oil filler cap with the mesh breather insides.) I had no exhaust leaks from the manifold, but asked National Bushing to put it on the truing table and even it off. I was surprised that a fair amount of metal had to be removed to bring it back to being straight and true. I am thankful that I never had any cracks or warpage in the manifold. The heat riser valve was frozen in the open position, and that was where I left it. [Editor's Note: I'm not sure I'd recommend that. Reproductions of the valve bodies are now available, and a correctly-functioning heat riser is an aid to engine warm-up. Some of the hardest wear on engines comes when they're running cold.]

I left my 1938 Buick Shop Manual and a MOTOR manual that covered '38s with Dan Stassen. I also left with him copies of Torque Tube articles that covered engine work. These were invaluable.

March 27, 1990 was the day on which I dropped off my engine. About a month later, on one of my trips "up north," I stopped in to see Dan on my way back home. (As mentioned earlier, I work the 4-12 PM shift at a V.A. hospital, so I have Monday mornings up north before I have to head back.) The news was not good. Initially, I had thought that the rings would be the main problem, but I found considerable damage to the pistons, and the babbitt on the rods was pretty well corroded. One cylinder wall was scored. [Editor's Note: Jim sent me one of his old pistons. There's a big piece busted off the top and the "lands" on top of the upper compression ring are damaged. The consensus of people I showed it to was that: (1) the engine had suffered from severe detonation; and (2) the rings may have been improperly sized, causing them to work up and down in their grooves.] I have a spare replacement engine (about '48 I believe) and thought of putting that in, but decided to keep the original. I gave Dan a Terrill Machine ad from Hemmings and told him to see what he could do.

A few weeks later I stopped in to see Dan again. He said that replacement rods with inserts would be more expensive than having my old rods rebabbitted. It seemed to me that, while insert bearings have some advantages, the babbitt bearings had lasted many years and had performed OK. So I decided to have the rods sent out for new babbitt. Terrill informed Dan that they had .030 oversize pistons. There was no doubt that we could bore out the cylinders by that much and remove all the scoring, so we went that route.

The engine work took the summer and part of the fall to do. The parts obtained from Terrill Machine were: 8 pistons .030 oversize; .030 oversize ring set; main bearing set; cam bearing set; overhaul gasket set. National Bushing did or had done: disassembly and assembly; cleaning; "freeze-out" plugs; valve job; shimming; re-bore; machine head; regrind the crank; rebabbitt the rods. The valves and seats looked OK. I decided I really did not need hardened valve seats.

While National Bushing was doing the engine, I was busy most weekends up north in preparation for the day I would get the engine back. I picked up the engine on the 29th of September.





*Six-Passenger Four-Door Touring Sedan with trunk back*  
**MODEL 81**

### **PART III**

With the engine at National Bushing, I had all kinds of time on my hands. What to do now? I really did know, but didn't want to face up to it. The engine would have to have a quality place to rest after I got it back. So, I said to myself, let's try to get organized.

I would clearly need paint. I went to a DuPont dealer and they mixed Van Gogh Green and Buick Engine Green from the formulas that were in the Torque Tube. I also picked up some lacquer thinner for cleaning the spray gun and general clean-up, enamel reducer, Vari-prime, converter, and hardener, along with a few spray cans of primer and black for smaller parts. I mentioned earlier that I'd gotten a 3HP, 12 gallon air compressor from Sears. When I had my pole barn built I asked that a 220-volt receptacle be put in. The air compressor was originally 120-volt, and I tried it that way for a while — not too good. It was convertible to 220-volt and that's what I did. (I had some fun trying to get the right plug-in for the cord that would match the outlet my electrician had put in.) The compressor performed just great on 220. I also mentioned that I'd bought an "economy" spray gun (DUMB). Luckily my neighbor had been a professional car painter, and had painted a '38 coupe, a '52 station wagon and a '67 Riviera I'd owned. He'd kept his spray gun and I was able to borrow it — no problem after that with spraying paint. I also put a moisture trap in the line to the spray gun outlet; this is important and should not be overlooked.

Now...I have everything off the front and the car is up on blocks. At this point I'd like to emphasize the importance of safety in all aspects of restoration: the car was well-supported with blocks while the front wheels were off, and when I got my wheels and tires back, they went on the back.

I realized that if I wanted to get everything cleaned and ready for painting, I would have to do it myself. The air compressor was used quite a bit, plus lots of rags, brushes, kerosene, lacquer thinner, putty knife and sandpaper. I won't go into detail, but I did get it done. Once things were clean, they were lightly sanded and wiped with reducer before painting. I have no running water in the barn. Before priming or painting I used compressed air to clean dust from hidden areas in the barn, and then vacuumed the entire area. I would have dampened the floor if water had been available.

I covered the car completely when I did any painting. By bending metal coat hangers into various shapes and suspending them from a steel pole I'd hung from the rafters, I was able to hang smaller items in the air for painting and drying. I was able to hang the bull nose from the steel pole, but the fenders were put on a table. I painted only

the underside or inside of items, so the original paint on the outside is untouched. After priming the insides of the fenders, I used an aerosol can of 3M clear rocker panel spray #05911; I sprayed this on as aid to prevention of rock damage to the paint, then sprayed on my coats of Van Gogh Green. I masked off the cowl and sprayed the frame with black paint, then I masked the frame and sprayed the cowl with green. (I also gave the transmission a new coat of black when I got it back from Gundy's Transmission.) Smaller parts (or those I forgot to paint with the spray gun) were done with Krylon aerosol primer and black.

While the fenders were off I replaced the front brake lines with new ones. Here again it took lots of time and many soakings with penetrating oil. The fittings came off after about six weekends; the last one broke loose after eight different attempts. With some help from a neighbor, I added fluid and bled the system after the new lines were in. A former owner had taken care of the linings and wheel cylinders. I also added some Spectro motorcycle fork oil to the front shock absorbers.



*Five-Passenger Two-Door Touring Sedan with trunk back*  
**MODEL 68**

#### **PART IV**

Some people call them "wheels", some say "rims". Mine were in need of a paint job. The tires were not too bad, but I decided to replace both the tires and tubes. I did some checking on prices for 6: 50 x 16 whitewalls — not many places carry them in stock! I thought my best bet was to get them through Sears Roebuck, which I did. (I see in their latest catalog that the price has since gone up about \$30 per tire.)

This turned into something close to a major project.

I brought the five old tires on the rims back from the barn to Eagan to have them demounted, then took the rims back up north where a friend got them sandblasted, then sprayed with an aerosol can primer. When I got set up for painting I sprayed them with Vari-prime and Van Gogh Green. Then, back to Eagan with the rims in the back of my "beater", to a place where I had them pin-striped. (Did a real nice job.) Things seemed to be going well, but the fun was only beginning.

I took the rims, tires and tubes to the place where I had the old tires demounted, and asked them to mount the new tires. I went back the next day to pick them up, and as I was paying the bill one of the workers commented that they were hard to balance because all of the rims were untrue. "What?!!!" After some further discussion it seemed that maybe the rims were bent when they were in the tire machine, that maybe it exerted too much force for the older rims to take. After some adjustment in the bill I left. I did thank them for at least telling me they'd bent the rims, before I put them on the car and found out then.



So, I had to find a place that could straighten rims. That was in Minneapolis — fortunately, not too far away. They managed to straighten the rims without removing the tires, and re-balanced everything. (However, there were a few extra marks on the tires and rims.) Believe me, these new tires turned out to be expensive! I hope when the car is back on the road there'll be no further problems.

I've included this bit about the tires primarily in the hope that some other members may be saved from the troubles I had with power tire equipment. A place with the old-fashioned equipment is probably best, where they know how to handle the older rims.



EDITOR'S NOTE: Although there is nothing new in it, I found Jim Rufener's little saga interesting and satisfying to read. It shows that the amateur, with a decent place to work and a minimum of equipment, can do a creditable job on some fairly major work. It also shows that careful organization, preparation, and attention to detail are highly desirable if not essential. I hope Jim's story will inspire others and that, I think, is its greatest value. We should have some more from him in a later issue.

We will also in a later issue have an account of my own recent engine rebuild — the one I never expected I would need to do. The two jobs may be contrasted in this respect: Jim operated on a budget, and did a considerable amount of work himself; while I did not wish to waste money, I did (as it turned out) none of the work myself, and determined that while the engine was out of the car I would spare little or no expense to (1) upgrade performance, and (2) make sure nothing was overlooked. Fortunately, I could afford to do that, even though it was money that, a year ago, I did not expect to spend on the car. (For example, I went to insert-bearing rods.) That is not to say that my approach was superior; just different. It is quite possible to get a nice-running engine that will serve you well for many years without going for broke.



*Four-Passenger Sport Coupe with opera seats*  
MODEL 46-S

# RADIATOR AND HOOD

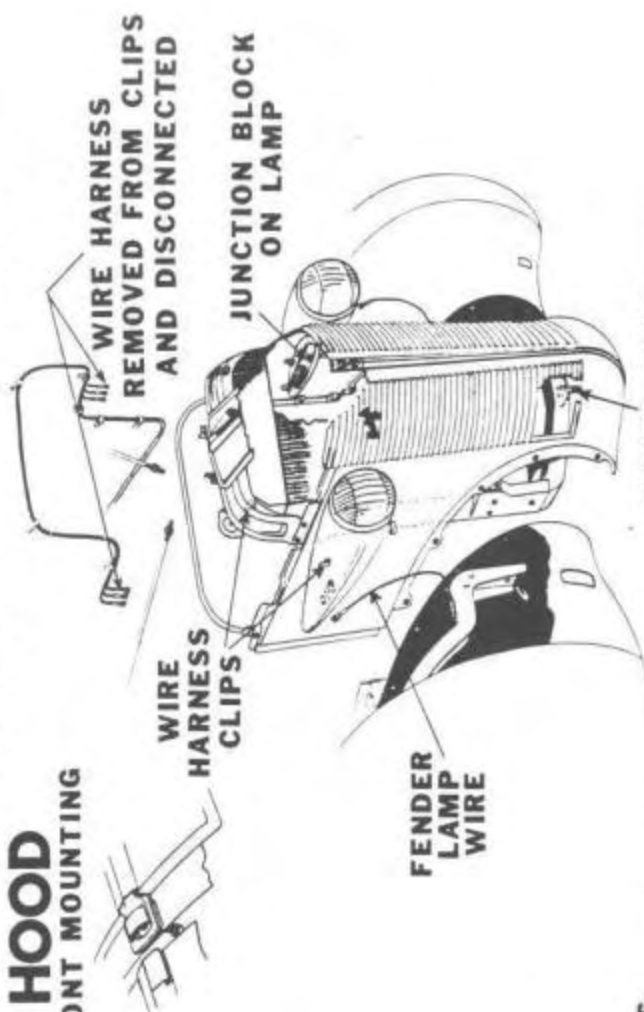
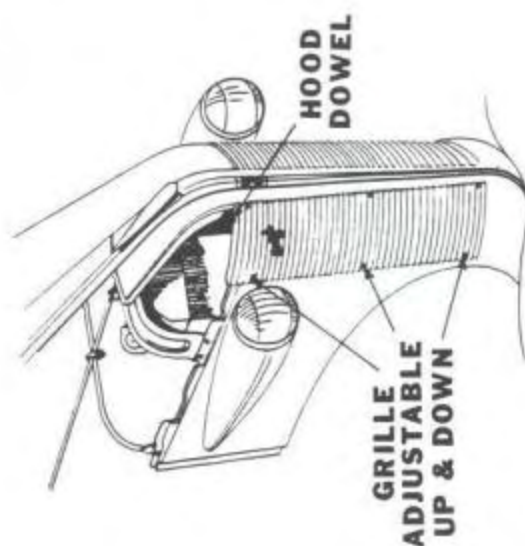
## BUICK

### FRONT ASSEMBLED

### FRONT DISASSEMBLED

#### HOOD

FRONT MOUNTING

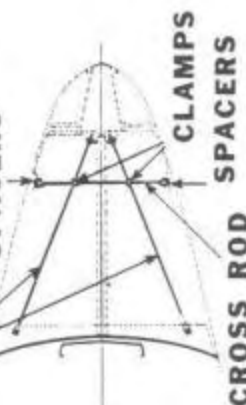


STRUT RODS

### HOOD ALIGNMENT

MAINTAINED BY {  
SPACERS  
STRUT RODS  
RADIATOR  
CENTER BOLT

SPACERS



CENTER BOLT  
HOLE IN FRAME SLOTTED  
FORE AND AFT

RADIATOR - ANCHORAGE & SHELL  
\*GRILLE - LAMPS - ORNAMENT  
REMOVED AS ASSEMBLY

\*CAN BE REMOVED  
INDIVIDUALLY



## RADIATOR & HOOD

RADIATOR - The radiator core mounts in a heavy support which is riveted and welded to a shell.

The grilles are held to the shell by screws and nuts and can be removed from the outside independent of other parts. Also they are adjustable up and down as the screw holes are elongated.

The radiator ornament can be removed by lifting one side of the hood and taking out three screws.

The headlamps bolt to the shell and can be removed independently, after the wire harness and fender lamp wire is disconnected from the terminal block on the lamp.

NOTE: The cores cannot be removed separately on early production cars because the radiator brace rod bracket is riveted to the radiator support and prevents the core from being lifted out.

A production change is contemplated to take effect very shortly, whereby this bracket will be bolted to the anchorage. This construction will permit removal separately after removing water pump assembly and the brace rod brackets, on the 80-90.

It also appears probable that the core can also be removed in this manner on the 40-60 after the change is made.

RADIATOR & SHELL ASSEMBLY REMOVAL - To remove the entire assembly:

1. Remove hood.

2. Loosen hose connections.
3. Unfasten strut rods at front end.
4. Disconnect wires at terminal blocks on lamps. Pull out fender lamp wire. Loosen wire harness at clips.
5. Remove nut at lower center support bolt.
6. Remove three bolts which fasten radiator anchorage to front fender irons.
7. Remove all screws holding radiator shell to front fenders - radiator may now be removed.

OPTIONAL METHOD - Fenders and fender irons can be left attached to the radiator assembly and removed as a unit with the radiator after the fenders are disconnected from the frame.

### HOOD REMOVAL

1. Remove nut under shroud which holds the rear hood hinge bracket.
2. Loosen front hood hinge bracket.
3. Lift rear of hood until it clears shroud and slides backwards until it disengages front anchorage.

HOOD ALIGNMENT - Hood alignment is dependent on four adjustments:

1. Spacing washers can be added or removed from between the radiator cross rod and clamps can be shifted.
2. The grille can be raised or lowered to meet the hood by loosening the grille mounting screws.
3. The radiator can be shifted by loosening the bolts at the fender irons and the radiator at the front cross member. The extent of this shifting is limited by the clearance in the front fender iron holes.
4. The strut rods can be lengthened or shortened. If these rods are used to pull or push a radiator assembly forcibly, it is likely to result in distorting the radiator shell assembly and causing a type of misalignment which cannot be corrected by adjustment.



# PARTS EXCHANGE



## PARTS FOR SALE

1937-8 80/90 series McLaughlin-Buick rear set brake drums, NOS, part No.1300709-10. Offers invited. BILL DENNEY (#863). 22 Scarborough Way, Dunbogan 2443, N.S.W. AUSTRALIA. Phone 065-599047.

Anyone interested in these parts, all or separate, quote a fair price and I'll sell: '37 4-door Century, model 61--gas tank; trunk lid; 4 doors with hardware (no rust); trunk light (no red lens); rear arm rests right & left sides with ash trays & lighters; grille (needs repair); radiator mount with side panels to mount headlights; tail lights with lenses, right & left sides; side molding, right & left (no dents); front & rear bumpers & brackets, also extra brackets front & rear; complete dashboard with working speedometer & gages, clock & ash tray (no glove box door); complete front end steering parts (no steering gear box), all in very good condition; complete rear end, drive shaft, stabilizer bar & springs; running board brackets. '38 4-door Century, model 61--complete side molding set; front fender lamps; rear tail lights (no lenses); right & left rear fenders (no rust); front & rear bumper brackets. You pay shipping. ALBERT NETTUNO (#869). 3060 So. Decatur Blvd., Apt. L-15, Las Vegas, NV 89102. 702/873-7775. (Editor's Note: now here's some good stuff, folks. THANK YOU, ALBERT!)

1938--brake drums (40)-\$20 each; bumper guard-\$45; pass. side splash pan (40)-\$30; engine splash pans, set of two(40)-\$60 set; front emergency brake cable (40; 60)-\$75; rear emergency brake cable (40, 60)-\$125. 1938 Buick literature-- radio access. price sheet (1 page) \$5; billboard ad (1 page)-\$5; leather & access. price sheet (2 pages) -\$7; GM bulletin on selling cars (3 pages)-\$10; "soory" letter from Buick to a non-Buick owner-\$10; Access. price sheet (3 pages)-\$10; Feb.14, 1938 Time Magazine with a Buick ad in it-\$20; self-shifter transmission manual-\$35; gate-fold color brochure (showing all models) -\$40; 32-page color brochure (showing all models)-\$65. All prices of parts plus shipping. DAVID BYLSMA (117). 7747 Siden Drive, Hanover, MD 21076. 301/551-7236. Call between 5:30 PM & 9:30 Pm EDT Mon.-Fri., any time weekends.

## PARTS WANTED

For 1938 60-C: Accelerator pedal complete; hood center strip; 2 front bumper guards; bumper badge; sidemount wheel securing "discs"; Century 3.9 ring & pinion NOS. BILL DENNEY (#863). 22 Scarborough Way, Dunbogan 2443, N.S.W. AUSTRALIA. Phone 065-599047



'37 Roadmaster--bumpers; brackets; gravel shield; wiper transmissions; trunk hinges; voltage regulator; carb to vacuum switch linkage; park light lenses; seat springs; engine splash pans; nice hub caps; hood pivots & center trim; convertible sedan parts--top latches; visors; front door vent window frames; rear window flippers; springs for top roller; window frames, driver side; right rear window regulator. Please help. DAVID POWERS (#894). 27732 Paseo Barona, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675. 714/493-1199.

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1937 model-46C rumble lid, spare tire lid and right front  
welled fender.

Jay Gray #644  
5230 Neroly Rd.  
Oakley, CA 94561

Ph. (415) 757-3487



## CARS FOR SALE



1937 Special model 41. Runs good; minor surface rust only; needs paint & upholstery; 99% complete & original. \$4500. JOE McKEE (#433). 6818 Moreland Ave., Cheyenne, Wyoming 82009. 307/635-5725.

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1937 Special. 12150 original miles. Runs & drives like new. Cobalt blue color. In storage since 1967. \$12,500 or best offer. Might trade for motor home. Contact Joe Schwilling, 1070 N.Cole Rd., Boise, Idaho 83704. 208/376-9000 days; 208/286-7292 eves.

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1937 Special coupe. New motor, clutch, transmission, tires, radiator, suspension & running gear rebuilt. Overall condition of car is very good. \$9500. CARL DAHL (#868). 2217 9th Ave., Sacramento, CA 95818. 916/441-2507.

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FOR SALE: 1937 Buick Mod 41, frame off restoration approx. 50% finished. Included is another complete 1937 Mod 41 for parts. Other items: professionally rebuilt engine, Hampton Coach interior, 3 complete side mount fenders with covers, 7 correct wheels, 4 NIB hubcaps, NIB Harnesses Unlimited wiring harness, 4 new black-wall tires and tubes, lots of additional: brass sleeved brake cylinders, silicone brake fluid, new Burton Waldron exhaust system, rebuilt shocks, handpainted woodgrain, plus lots more including a rough 1938 Mod 48 and some 1937 Mod 81 parts.  
Asking \$6500 CURT BACKER #468 Bagley, Mn. 56621 218-694-2388

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1938 model 47. Total ground-up restoration. Titian maroon. National prize winner. One of the best. \$29,500 OBO. (Much more invested in this fine car.) O.J. MISJUNS(#473). 1023 Highland Rd., Newtown, PA 18940. 215/860-8801. (IXX-8)

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## CARS FOR SALE



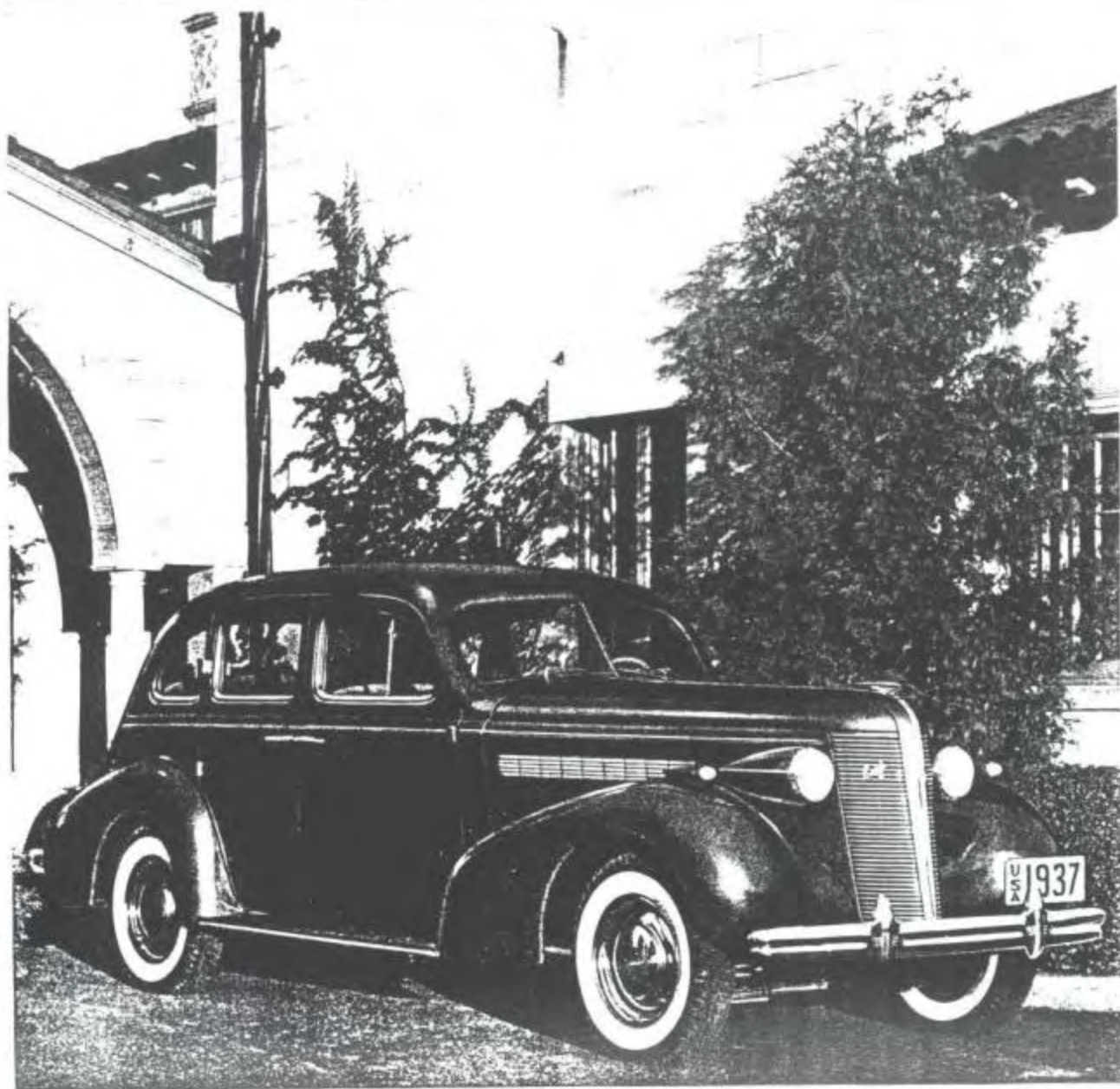
1937 Model 66-C convertible coupe. Sudan Blue. Sidemounts. 200 dry miles since total professional restoration. AACA Senior, BCA National 1st Place. Illness and loss of storage force sale. \$40,000. No disappointments. RANDY DOZIER (#561). 5829 Beauregard Drive, Nashville, TN 37215. 615/665-1452.

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1938 Model 41. Rembrandt Black. No sidemounts. 500 dry miles since total professional restoration. AACA Senior, BCA National 1st Place. Illness and loss of storage force sale. \$18,000 sacrifice. RANDY DOZIER (#561). 5829 Beauregard Drive, Nashville, TN 37215. 615/665-1452.

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*Buick Series Forty Special Four-Door Sedan with plain back. Model No. 47*







## NEW MEMBERS



Alan Wieling (#895)  
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Clarkston, MI 48346  
313/623-7360  
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Bob Smith (#897)  
74 N. Conrad Ave.  
Lecanto, FL 32661  
904/746-6430  
'38 46-C

Carlos Bueno (#899)  
136 State St.  
Pontiac, MI 48341  
313/332-7352  
'37 41

Hayden W. Howell (#896)  
125 Pinewood Dr.  
Greer, SC 29651

Dan & Eileen Morris (#897)  
25218 Meadow Way N.E.  
Arlington, WA 98223  
206/435-3593  
'37 40



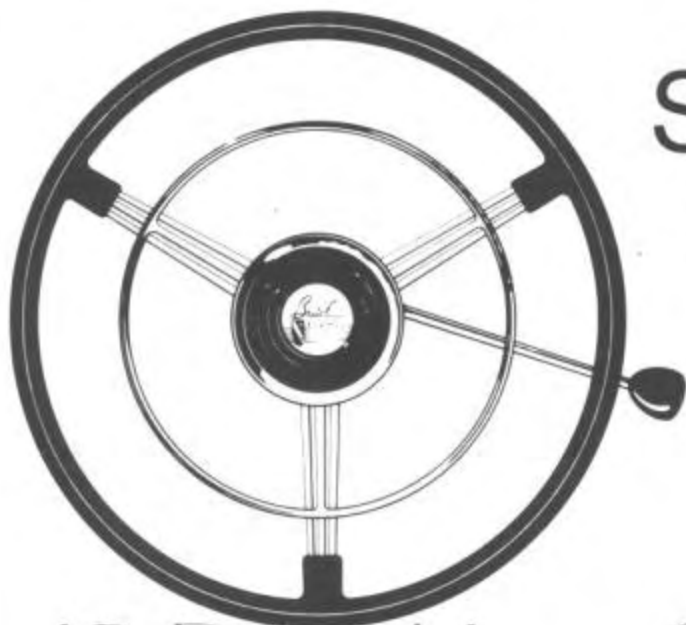
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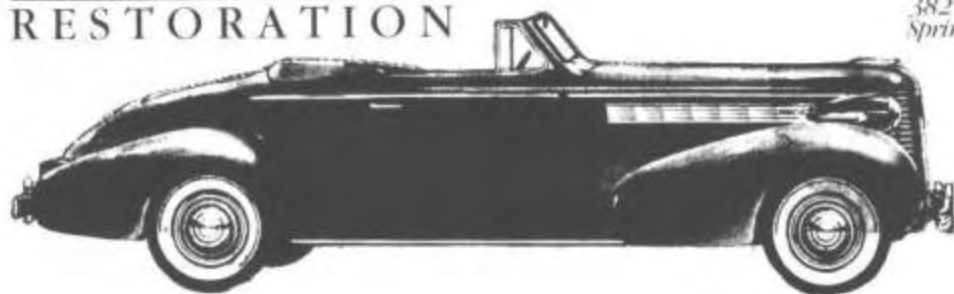
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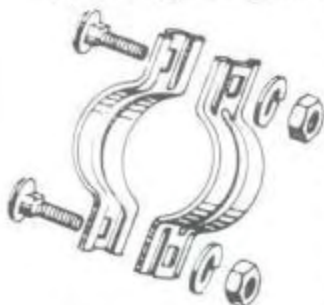
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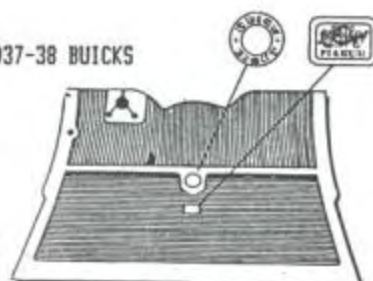
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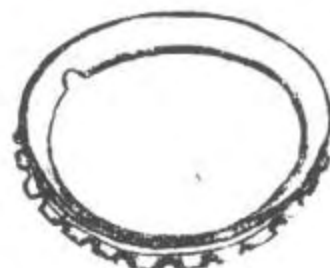
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1937-38 WIPER ARM. WA-360 \$15 EA. BLADES WB-8 \$4EA.



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- 1941 Model 44
- 1942-48 Model 56S
- 1936-39 Models 46-66
- 1937-38 Models 47-61-67
- 1940 Model 51
- 1942-49 Model 41
- 1946-49 Model 51
- 1950 Model 72
- 1951 Model 52
- 1953 Skylark



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## 3-Color Embroidered Jackets

ROYAL BLUE

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1927  
to  
1953

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AUTHENTIC REPRODUCTION WIRING SYSTEMS THRU 1953  
HANDCRAFTED WITH THE FINEST MATERIALS

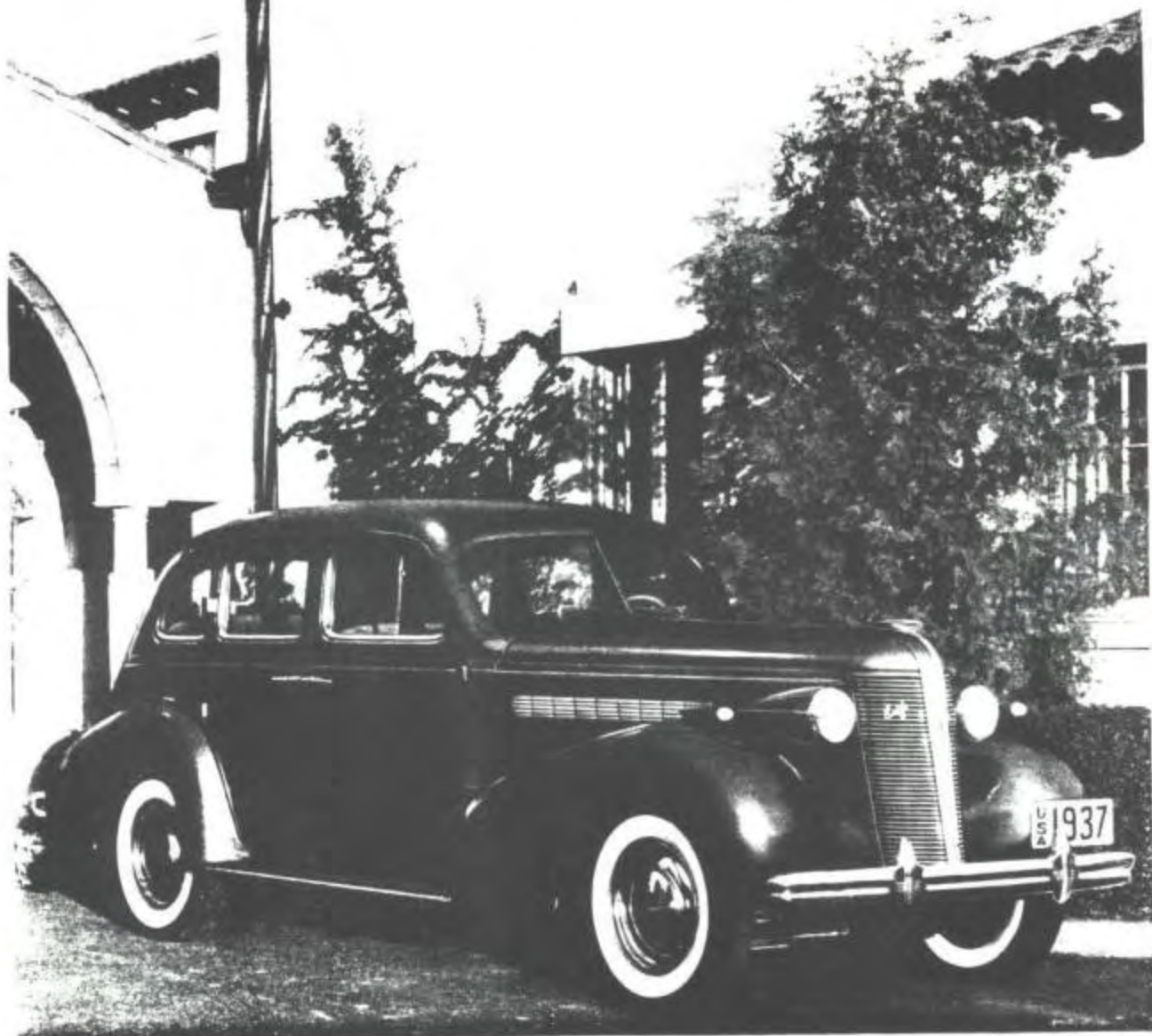
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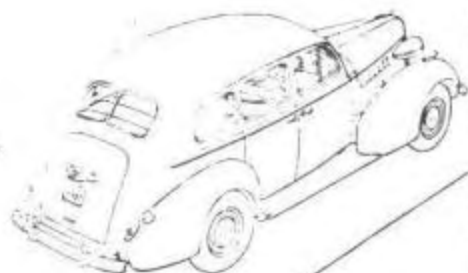
Buick Series Forty Special Four-Door Sedan with plain back. Model No. 47



**\$845\*** The LOWEST PRICED four-door sedan  
in BUICK HISTORY

• Here is the best news that motorwise America has heard in many a long year. \$845\* for this 1937 Buick *Special* Four-Door Five-Passenger Sedan—the lowest price in thirty-three years of distinguished motorcar building. Shoulder to shoulder with the finest, this brilliant member of the 1937 Buick Series Forty commands the proudest meaning of the word “Special.” Though the least costly of any Buick of its type ever produced, it is larger, roomier, sturdier, more powerful, more beautiful. It is a standout on any road, in any company or surroundings—the greatest value of its kind that Buick has ever offered.

\*LIST PRICE AT FLINT. STANDARD AND SPECIAL ACCESSORY GROUPS EXTRA





# Columbus Capers

## June 27-30



1991 EASTERN CLUB MEET

### REGISTRATION FORM

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

CLUB NO. \_\_\_\_\_

SPOUSE: \_\_\_\_\_

OTHERS: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE x \$ **36** = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(ENCLOSE CHECK OR MONEY ORDER)

I WILL ARRIVE:    THURS. PM    ( )  
                          FRI.    AM    ( )  
                                 PM    ( )  
                         SAT.    AM    ( )

( ) I WILL DRIVE    ( ) TRAILER    ( ) MY '37 OR '38: YEAR & MODEL \_\_\_\_\_

( ) I WILL ARRIVE BY OTHER MEANS

QUESTIONS: CALL EDITOR AT 614/687-3041 (day) or 614/436-7579 (night)

Registration fee includes bus transportation and admission to Immke Collection, Saturday night banquet, hospitality room, and other miscellaneous items. All meals other than the banquet and Garth's "tour" refreshments are the responsibility of the individual participants.



PACIFIC

COAST

CLASSIC



Escape with us in 1991, far away from the maddening crowd of the cities. Imagine traveling back in time to a quiet hideaway among the vineyards of the California wine country and the beautiful Pacific coast. The country side is perfect for a slow cruise in your 1937 or 1938 Buick.

We have planned a drive to the Napa Valley Wine Country for the first night, then on to the Pacific coast town of Bodega Bay for the second night. There are many things to do and to see along the way.

### Registration Form

Reservations (to include registration, banquet and motel) must be received no later than May 15, 1991

Member Name \_\_\_\_\_ '37 - '38 # \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Name (if attending) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Registration (individual or family) \$25.00

#### Banquet Reservations (includes tax and tip):

# _____	Prime Rib	@ \$23.00 each	.....\$ _____
# _____	Broiled Salmon	@ \$23.00 each	.....\$ _____
# _____	Chicken	@ \$23.00 each	.....\$ _____
Total (including \$25.00 registration)			.....\$ _____

Make checks payable to Cecil Don,  
1127 Ashwood Court, Yuba City, CA 95991

For information call:  
Judy Dahl (916) 441-2507

#### Motel Registration - call direct

July 21, 1991:	Napa Valley Lodge,	rooms \$115.50	(707) 944-2468
July 22, 1991:	Bodega Coast Inn,	rooms \$77.76	(707) 875-2217

(A photocopy of this page is an acceptable registration form)

